

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

USLO SACLANT

CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 OSLO 0620

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TGEN, SV, NO, UR

SUBJ: NORWAY ASKS WHETHER U.S. INTERESTED IN JOINT
ARCTIC RESEARCH PROJECT WITH USSR

SUMMARY: AS NORWAY ENTERS PERIOD OF MORE INTENSE NEGOTIATIONS
WITH USSR OVER LEGAL MEASURES IT HAS PROMULGATED ON
SVALBARD (FEBRUARY 11) AND OVER COOPERATION IN THE ARCTIC
(FEBRUARY 25), IT SHOWS SOME EVIDENCE OF CONCERN AND
DIFFERENCES OF VIEW ON HOW BEST TO HANDLE THE SOVIETS.
IN DISCUSSION OF FORTHCOMING TALKS ON ARCTIC COOPERATION
WITH DIRECTORS OF THE NANSEN FOUNDATION (CONCERNED WITH
POLITICAL-LEGAL ASPECTS OF POLAR DEVELOPMENTS) AND THE
NORWEGIAN POLAR INSTITUTE (SCIENTIFIC BODY UNDER THE
MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY), SPECIAL CONCERN WAS VOICED
REGARDING A SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR BILATERAL COOPERATION IN
SURVEYING ICE FLOES IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC. DIRECTOR OF
NANSEN FOUNDATION, WHO IS REPORTEDLY CLOSE TO FOREIGN
MINISTER FRYDENLUND, FEARS THAT NORWAY WILL BE UNDER PRES-
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SURE TO PERMIT USSR TO UNDERTAKE PROJECTS WHICH GO BEYOND

NORWAY'S CAPABILITY, INCLUDING THIS PROJECT FOR AIR RECONNAISSANCE FROM SVALBARD OF ICE FLOE MOVEMENTS, PARTICULARLY SINCE NORWAY IS ANXIOUS TO DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE USSR IN THE NORTH. HE EXPLAINED HE HAD DISCUSSED AND HAD SUPPORT IN FOREIGN MINISTRY -- AND HE CLAIMED ALSO ON PART OF DIRECTOR OF POLAR INSTITUTE, WHICH IS MORE QUESTIONABLE -- FOR AN INFORMAL APPROACH TO THE U.S. TO SEE WHETHER IT MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN A JOINT PROJECT WITH NORWAY AND THE USSR TO SURVEY THE GREENLAND SEA, IN WHICH U.S. WOULD, IN EFFECT, HANDLE THE AREA WEST OF SVALBARD. IN NORWAY KNEW, HE SAID, THAT THE U.S. WOULD BE INTERESTED IN A MULTILATERAL PROJECT, THIS WOULD AT LEAST STRENGTHEN ITS HAND IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO SOUND OUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION AND ANY OTHER APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATIONS DISCREETLY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY INTEREST IN A PROJECT TO SURVEY THE GREENLAND SEA -- SHOULD NORWAY REQUEST U.S. COOPERATION. EVEN IF U.S. COOPERATION IS TO BE USED BY NORWAY AS A THREAT TO ENCOURAGE SOVIETS TO DROP THEIR PROPOSALS, THE PLOY WOULD APPEAR TO BE IN OUR INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

1. ARCTIC COOPERATION TALKS. DCM MET ON FEBRUARY 8 WITH THE DIRECTOR OF NORWEGIAN POLAR INSTITUTE, TORE GJELSVIK, WHO WILL HEAD THE DELEGATION WHICH MEETS IN OSLO FEBRUARY 25 TO DISCUSS COOPERATION IN THE ARCTIC WITH THE SOVIETS. GJELSVIK NOTED DISAPPROVINGLY THAT SOVIET DELEGATION TO THESE SCIENTIFIC TALKS WILL BE HEADED BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO NORWAY ROMANOVSKIY AND INCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. ON THE SCIENTIFIC SIDE, IT INCLUDES WELL-KNOWN GLACIOLOGIST (AVSUK?), DIRECTOR OF SEVMORGEOLOG TRUST SOKOLOV, WHO IS BASED ON SVALBARD, AND ULYANOVSKIY, DIRECTOR OF ARCTIC COAL TRUST. GJELSVIK, WHO WAS FAIRLY CLOSE-MOUTHED ABOUT FORTHCOMING TALKS, REFERRED ONLY TO A 26 POINT SOVIET PROPOSAL. HE STATED BLUNTLY, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOVIET PURPOSE IS CLEAR: TO USE SCIENTIFIC TALKS TO TRY TO ISOLATE SVALBARD. HENCE NORWEGIAN INSISTANCE ON DISCUSSING COOPERATION IN THE ARCTIC AS A WHOLE, NOT MERELY SVALBARD. GJELSVIK WAS NOT SANGUINE THAT SOVIET MILITARY

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WILL PERMIT GENUINE COOPERATION IN SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION IN THE ARCTIC TO TAKE PLACE, BUT THE NORWEGIAN SIDE INTENDS, HE SAID, TO PRESS FOR AT LEAST AN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION, IF NOT THE OPPORTUNITY ACTUALLY TO VISIT PLACES LIKE NOVYA ZEMLYA AND FRANZ JOSEPH LAND, E.G. TO DETERMINE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE FAUNA (POLAR BEARS) THERE AND ON SVALBARD.

2. AIR RECONNAISSANCE PROPOSAL. GJELSVIK CONFIRMED THAT

THE MOST TROUBLESOME SOVIET PROPOSAL IS ONE WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR AIR RECONNAISSANCE, BASED ON THE NEW AIRPORT ON SVALBARD, OF THE ICE CAP FROM GREENLAND TO FRANZ JOSEPH LAND TO DETERMINE ICE FLOE MOVEMENTS. HE SAID THAT, GIVEN OBVIOUS PURPOSE UNDERLYING THIS PROPOSAL, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NORWEGIAN PLANES COVER THE AREA WEST OF SVALBARD. HE SEEMED SURPRISED, HOWEVER, WHEN DCM MENTIONED SUGGESTION PUT FORWARD BY DIRECTOR OF INFLUENTIAL NANSEN FOUNDATION, FINN SOLLIE, DURING COURTESY CALL ON FEBRUARY 5, THAT ICE FLOE PROJECT BE MADE MULTILATERAL TO PERMIT U.S. SCIENTISTS TO UNDERTAKE THOSE ASPECTS OF PROJECT WHICH WERE BEYOND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF NORWAY. GJELSVIK SAID HE WORKED VERY CLOSELY WITH SOLLIE BUT DENIED HAVING DISCUSSED PROJECT IN THESE TERMS WITH HIM, AS SOLLIE HAD ALLEGED TO DCM. GJELSVIK ARGUED THAT SOVIETS ARE RELUCTANT TO ENGAGE IN MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN THE ARCTIC. NORWAY INTENDS, THEREFORE, TO PROPOSE BILATERAL PROJECTS WHICH WILL MESH WITH ARCTIC PROJECTS BEING UNDERTAKEN UNDER OTHER BILATERAL PROGRAMS; BUT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE AIR RECONNAISSANCE PROJECT, EVEN IF NOT USING U.S. PLANES, WOULD HURT PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION WITH SOVIET SCIENTISTS. GJELSVIK APPEARED DISTURBED BY SOLLIE'S REMARKS TO DCM SINCE HE NOTED THAT SOLLIE (A FORMER FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER) IS CLOSE TO FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND.

3. WHEN DCM ASKED SOLLIE FOR EXPLANATION OF DISPARITY WITH GJELSVIK VIEWS, SOLLIE INSISTED THAT HE HAD INDEED DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE ICE FLOE PROJECT WITH GJELSVIK (ALTHOUGH IDEA OF USING AMERICAN PLANES WAS HIS OWN) AND THAT HE HAD THE SUPPORT OF BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN, WHO IS THE NEW ADVISER ON POLAR AFFAIRS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (REPLACING AMBASSADOR

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VENNEMOE). SOLLIE SUGGESTED THAT THIS DISPARITY IN VIEW-POINT REFLECTED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC AND POLITICAL APPROACH TO ARCTIC PROBLEMS; AS SCIENTIST, GJELSVIK OF

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INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 DODE-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 OSLO 0620

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COURSE HOPES TO HAVE NORWEGIAN PLANES AVAILABLE FOR RESEARCH. THE DANGER, SOLLIE NOTED, IS THAT NORWAY WILL NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES, E.G. PLANES, TO UNDERTAKE A PROGRAM OF THE SCOPE PROPOSED BY MOSCOW. HE CONFIRMED THAT MOSCOW HAD PUT FORWARD AN AMBITIOUS 26-POINT PROGRAM WHICH IS PRESENTED AS A SINGLE PACKAGE. NORWAY IS CONCERNED THAT IT WILL BE UNDER PRESSURE TO ACCEPT A LARGER SOVIET PROGRAM THAN IT WOULD LIKE, IF IT IS UNABLE TO FUND ITS OWN FULL SHARE. FOR EXAMPLE, NORWEGIAN AIR FORCE ORIONS ARE SUITABLE FOR ICE FLOE RECONNAISSANCE, BUT THEY ARE UNACCEPTABLE FOR A JOINT PROJECT WITH THE SOVIETS BECAUSE OF THEIR MILITARY CONFIGURATION.

4. JOINT RESEARCH FOR OIL. GJELSVIK IMPLIED THAT DISCUSSION OF ARCTIC COOPERATION IS LINKED ALSO TO THE NEGOTIATIONS NEXT MAY WITH THE THE SOVIETS (OSLO'S 512) ON DIVISION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. A SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR JOINT GEOLOGICAL RESEARCH FOR OIL DEPOSITS, NOT ONLY ON SVALBARD BUT ALSO ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF, IS CONFIDENTIAL

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UNACCEPTABLE, HE SAID, "UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES." WHEN ASKED WHAT MIGHT CHANGE THIS ASSESSMENT, HE SAID THE QUESTION OF THE DIVISION LINE ON THE SHELF MUST FIRST BE RESOLVED.

5. FROM SOLLIE'S POLITICAL STANDPOINT, THE FORTHCOMING

NEGOTIATIONS ON ARCTIC COOPERATION AND ON DIVISION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF FIT INTO THE MUCH LARGER AND MORE SERIOUS QUESTION OF NORWAY' RELATIONS IN THE NORTH WITH ITS BIG EASTERN NEIGHBOR. THE PROBLEM, HE EXPLAINED, IS ON THE ONE HAND TO ENSURE THAT THE USSR DOES NOT USE THE COVER OF SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION TO STRENGTHEN ITS POSLTION ON SVALBARD. ON THE OTHER HAND, NORWAY IS CONCERNED TO CONCILIATE A LARGE NEIGHBOR WHOSE VITAL SECURITY INTERESTS REQUIRE THAT IT HAVE UNHAMPERED ACCESS TO THE NORTH ATLANTIC. THE FACT THAT THE UPCOMING ARCTIC COOPERATION NEGOTIATIONS ARE TAKING PLACE ON THE EVE OF BRATTELI'S VISIT TO THE USSR IS FAIRLY IMMATERIAL, AT LEAST IN GJELSVIK'S VIEW. THEY ARE THE FIRST OF SEVERAL MEETINGS ON ARCTIC COOPERATION, HE SAID, AND HE DID NOT ANTICIPATE THAT ANY SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS WOULD BE WORKED OUT FOR SIGNATURE IN MOSCOW. (COMMENT: THE SOVIETS MAY HAVE A DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT.) REGARDLESS WHETHER ANY AGREEMENTS ARE TO BE CONCLUDED IN TIME FOR THE MOSCOW VISIT, NORWAY IS ANXIOUS TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS IT CAN BE IN THE UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS.

6. U.S. ROLE. EVEN GJELSVIK APPARENTLY SEES SOME ROLE FOR THE U.S. SINCE HE SAID HE PLANNED TO REMIND THE SOVIETS THAT THEY HAD SPONSORED A PROGRAM OF U.S-SOVIET-NORWEGIAN COOPERATION IN THE ARCTIC CALLED POLEX SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WHICH HAS BEEN DORMANT. SOLLIE EXPLAINED THAT IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL AT SOME POINT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE ABLE TO SUGGEST TO THE SOVIETS THAT, SINCE SOME OF THE PROJECTS ARE OF VAST SCALE, THE AMERICANS AND PERHAPS ALSO THE CANADIANS SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO THE PICTURE. SOLLIE RECALLED THAT NORWAY HAD FELT OBLIGED SEVERAL YEARS AGO TO TURN DOWN A NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION(NSF) PROPOSAL FOR STUDY OF THE ICE FLOES IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC BECAUSE IT DID NOT FEEL THAT IT COULD ACCEPT A BILATERAL PROJECT WITH THE U.S. INVOLVING SUCH A SENSITIVE

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GEOGRAPHIC AREA -- ANY MORE THAN NORWAY WISHED NOW TO ACCEPT A SIMILAR BILATERAL PROJECT WITH THE USSR. HE WONDERED WHETHER THE NSF MIGHT STILL BE INTERESTED, AND WHAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE USG WOULD BE TO SUCH A PROJECT.

7. SOLLIE EXPLAINED THAT HIS ORIGINAL PURPOSE IN DISCUSSING THE PROJECT WITH DCM WAS TWO-FOLD: (A) TO DETERMINE WHETHER NORWAY COULD PROPOSE MULTILATERAL COOPERATION IN SURVEYING ICE FLOES IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC WITH ASSURANCE OF U.S. SUPPORT SHOULD ITS PROPOSAL BE ACCEPTED; AND (B) TO ALERT USG TO THE FACT NORWAY IS ENTERING A RATHER COMPLEX SET OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH AFFECT SECURITY INTERESTS OF U.S., USSR, AND NORWAY.

NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS GENERALLY FEEL THAT U.S. HAS NOT SHOWN AS MUCH INTEREST IN ARCTIC AFFAIRS AS IT SHOULD, BASED ON ITS REAL INTERESTS THERE, FOR THE MOMENT, SOLLIE SAID, NORWAY WANTS U.S. TO REMAIN IN THE BACKGROUND AND CERTAINLY NOT MAKE ANY STATEMENTS ABOUT SVALBARD. BUT MOMENT MAY COME, SOLLIE SAID (ECHOING IN SOMEWHAT BLUNTER LANGUAGE WHAT FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE IMPLIED IN DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBOFFS) WHEN IT WOULD BE IN NORWEGIAN INTEREST FOR U.S. TO PLAY A MORE CONSPICUOUS ROLE TO OFFSET SOVIET PRESSURE ON SVALBARD.

8. COMMENT: IT WOULD APPEAR FROM THE REMARKS OF BOTH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS AND THE ABOVE POLAR EXPERTS, THAT NORWAY IS STILL IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A POLICY TOWARD THE NORTH. WE ARE NOT YET ABLE TO EVALUATE THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE PLAYERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY, NOR THEIR MOTIVES. IT IS POSSIBLE THE NORWEGIANS WISH SIMPLY TO BE ABLE TO INVOKE THE THREAT OF A LARGER AMERICAN PRESENCE ON SVALBARD IN ORDER TO DETER THE SOVIETS FROM PRESSING SENSITIVE PROJECTS LIKE AIR RECONNAISSANCE. THEY ARE ALSO INCLINED, HOWEVER, TO SEE THEMSELVES AS BRIDGE-BUILDERS BETWEEN THE SUPER-POWERS, AND MAY WISH TO ENCOURAGE SOVIET-AMERICAN COOPERATION IN THE NORTH. WHATEVER THEIR PRECISE MOTIVES, IT WOULD SEEM TO BE IN U.S. INTEREST TO COOPERATE WITH THE NORWEGIANS-- TO THE EXTENT THAT THEIR POLICIES DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT OUR INTERESTS.

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8. ACTION REQUESTED: WE CAN SEE SOME ADVANTAGES TO STRENGTHENING NORWAY'S HAND IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS ON ARCTIC COOPERATION, FROM BOTH A SCIENTIFIC AND SECURITY STANDPOINT. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, THEREFORE, IF THE DEPARTMENT WOULD DISCREETLY FEEL OUT NSF OR OTHER APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATIONS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY INTEREST AND MONEY FOR COOPERATION IN SURVEYING THE MOVEMENT OF ICE IN THE GREENLAND SEA, IF ASKED BY THE NORWEGIANS. (GJELSVIK DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS A CLOSE FRIEND OF JOE FLETCHER, WHO IS APPARENTLY AT NSF AND VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE ON QUESTIONS OF COOPERATION WITH THE SOVIETS IN ARCTIC RESEARCH.) IF WE COULD OBTAIN A REACTION, PREFERABLY BEFORE FEBRUARY 25, THE INFORMATION SHOULD BE PASSED TO THE NORWEGIANS THROUGH THIS EMBASSY RATHER THAN THE NORWEGIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, WHERE IT MIGHT RAISE UNNECESSARY QUESTIONS.

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